UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FIFTIETH SESSION

Official Records

SIXTH COMMITTEE
8th meeting
held on
Friday, 6 October 1995
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. LEHMANN (Denmark)

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AGENDA ITEM 146: MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM (continued)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.6/50/SR.8
17 October 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

95-81427 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 146: MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM (continued) (A/50/372 and Add.1; A/50/67-S/1995/64, A/50/128-S/1995/247, A/50/133-S/1995/282, A/50/135-S/1995/293, A/50/168-S/1995/341, A/50/215-S/1995/475, A/50/254-S/1995/501, A/50/305-S/1995/608, A/50/315-S/1995/622, A/50/359-S/1995/718 and A/50/457-S/1995/811)

1. Ms. CHOKRON (Israel) welcomed the adoption of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism annexed to General Assembly resolution 49/60. Efforts should be concentrated on means and measures to combat international terrorism and achieve cooperation among States with a view to preventing and combating terrorist acts. Cooperation was beginning to be developed among States in the Middle East region; Israel hoped that such cooperation would be extended to include the area of terrorism, so that it would be possible to face common threats. It was regrettable that certain States in the region were still encouraging or facilitating acts of international terrorism; Israel was taking all possible measures at the national and international levels to combat such acts, which were most often directed against the peace efforts being made in the region.

2. Acts of terrorism differed in their nature and sphere of action. International law relating to the struggle against international terrorism must therefore continue to be developed in the form of ad hoc international conventions which would be added, if necessary, to existing conventions. The principle of the rule of law would thereby be strengthened.

3. Ms. FERNANDEZ de GURMENDI (Argentina) said that Argentina attached high priority to item 146 because it had been the victim of two brutal acts of international terrorism, against the Israeli Embassy and the Argentine Jewish association, which had resulted in many deaths and substantial property damage.

4. While statistics cited during the debate showed an apparent decline in the number of terrorist acts, terrorism was incorporating technological advances which greatly increased its capacity for destruction and transnational action. That meant that no member of the international community could consider itself safe from terrorism.

5. The struggle to combat and eradicate terrorism required, first, a firm commitment of each State to combat terrorist acts at the national level, to refrain from providing assistance, refuge or support to terrorists and to strengthen and develop national legislation and adopt whatever measures were necessary to prosecute or extradite terrorists. It was especially important to strengthen the effectiveness of the judiciary so as to ensure that the struggle against terrorism did not become an opportunity for human rights violations on the part of the State. Whatever the circumstances, States must maintain a balance between meeting the needs of security and justice and respecting individual rights and public freedoms.

6. National measures must be accompanied by decisive regional and international action. It was critically important to improve the mechanisms of

cooperation and coordination among Governments. In the Americas, regional cooperation against terrorism was being intensified. A specialized conference on terrorism was to be convened in 1996, under the auspices of the Organization of American States, as decided at the summit meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Americas held in Miami in December 1994. Her Government had invited the countries of South America and the United States of America and Canada to participate in consultations on cooperation to prevent and eliminate international terrorism which had been held in Buenos Aires on 1 and 2 August 1995. The practical measures which had been suggested included exchanging information on terrorist organizations and activities and strengthening national legislation and international law with a view to legal, police and intelligence cooperation aimed at combating terrorist activities. Specific measures had been proposed in respect of border and transport security, migration, and training in counter-terrorism techniques; attention had also been drawn to the need to prevent the abuse of diplomatic privileges and immunities to commit or support terrorist activities.

7. While continuing to supplement the numerous international legal instruments in the area of terrorism, it was essential to bring about universal participation in the existing conventions. It was also necessary to abandon divisive theoretical discussions and concentrate on adopting practical and effective measures. The Declaration was the strongest and most unequivocal condemnation of international terrorism ever made by the General Assembly. The current anniversary session was a particularly appropriate time to reaffirm the purposes, principles and objectives of the Declaration and promote its implementation.

8. Her delegation supported the modalities of implementation of paragraph 10 of the Declaration proposed by the Secretary-General in his report (A/50/372) and in particular the suggested methodology of grouping the information sent by States under two separate headings; it hoped that States would cooperate actively in providing the necessary information. Her delegation also agreed that the analytical review of international legal instruments should be strictly descriptive rather than involving value judgements, which should be left to States. Her delegation found it regrettable that the compendium of national laws and regulations would be published in English and French only. That restriction not only violated the principle of equal treatment of all the official languages of the Organization but would also reduce the volume of contributions and undermine the value of the compendium on a subject of crucial importance for the preservation of international peace and security.

9. Mr. ORDZHONIKIDZE (Russian Federation) said that the Russian Federation unequivocally condemned all acts of terrorism and consistently advocated the enhancement of international anti-terrorist cooperation and the further consolidation of the efforts of all States in that field. In the light of recent tragic events in Budennovsk, Tokyo, Oklahoma City, Buenos Aires and Paris, it had to be recognized that counter-terrorism was inadequate compared with the scope of the problem. The unprecedented scale of terrorist activity, including cases in which weapons of mass destruction had been used, demonstrated that terrorism was becoming one of the most serious new challenges to international security. The Russian Federation believed that a special meeting of the Security Council should be convened on the issue of international terrorism.

10. The United Nations had a special role to play in establishing an anti-terrorist front of States, overcoming political and ideological confrontation and enhancing agreement on the basis of the principles of international law and universal human values. The adoption of the Declaration was a major contribution to strengthening the cooperation of States in combating terrorism and transforming that cooperation, under the auspices of the United Nations, into practical action. The international legal basis of that cooperation must be strengthened. Those countries which had not yet done so must, as a matter of priority, assume their obligations under the basic universal anti-terrorism conventions. On the basis of those Conventions, international recommendations could be drawn up on mutual assistance among States in combating acts of terrorism, including the preparation of a model bilateral agreement on cooperation in that field. Such documents should be elaborated within the framework of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Work should be continued on the improvement and harmonization of national legislation with generally accepted international legal norms, including the systematic exchange of information and experience. In order to develop a legal framework to combat the most dangerous forms of terrorism, an international instrument must be drawn up for the prevention, suppression and elimination of the consequences of acts of terrorism using nuclear weapons and nuclear materials, and also an instrument which would ensure the physical protection of chemical and biological materials in order to prevent terrorists from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction.

11. With regard to the modalities of implementation of paragraph 10 of the Declaration, his delegation fully endorsed the efforts made by the Secretary-General and believed that it was necessary to make the fullest possible use of the existing potential of the United Nations. Besides improving coordination in the activities of the relevant bodies of the United Nations system, there was a need to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other anti-terrorist organizations and structures, particularly in the practical area. Some positive results had already been achieved, for instance within the framework of the European Union. Active work was being conducted under the auspices of the Group of Seven with the participation of the Russian Federation. The dissemination among Member States of experience acquired at different levels in combating terrorism would play an important role in enhancing practical cooperation among States. His delegation supported the measures outlined in the report with respect to organizing workshops and training courses and providing technical assistance to States in combating terrorism.

12. His delegation was particularly concerned about the growing connections between terrorists and organized crime, drug trafficking and illicit arms trafficking, as reflected in the relevant documents of the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime. There was an obvious need for the international community to adopt comprehensive political and legal measures to combat terrorist organizations that were using resources obtained from drug trafficking and strengthen the control of arms sales in order to close the channels of arms acquisition by terrorists. His delegation supported the recommendation of the Ninth Congress to create a working group of the Commission to consider those issues.

13. His delegation believed that international cooperation in combating terrorism would contribute to the strengthening of global security, and that the Committee should therefore continue its consideration of the item on an annual basis.

14. Mr. AL-HAJRI (Qatar) observed that the Middle East had been adversely affected by international terrorism. His country, wishing to avert anything that might threaten the peace, stability and security of the region, unconditionally condemned all acts of terrorism and supported the related provisions contained in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights.

15. Qatar supported the international measures adopted for the elimination of international terrorism, foremost among which were the related international treaties and their ratification. It had acceded to the various conventions for the suppression of unlawful acts in respect of aircraft. In addition, it cooperated with other Arab States and competent regional and international organizations in the adoption of measures to combat international terrorism.

16. Further measures that might contribute to the elimination of terrorism were economic development and the eradication of poverty in developing countries, as well as greater public awareness of the dangers and consequences of terrorism and of extremism, which provided fertile soil for terrorism.

17. As the representative of an Islamic country whose law was derived from the Islamic Sharia, he wished to stress that Islam was a religion of peace and love that permitted neither terrorism nor the unjustified killing of a human being.

18. The increased gravity and complexity of international terrorism called for the adoption of binding legal measures by the international community, represented by the United Nations, in addition to the security measures adopted by States. The Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism annexed to General Assembly resolution 49/60 stressed the importance of a proper legal framework for those measures. The Sixth Committee should establish the bases for that framework. His delegation supported the content of the related draft resolution and all efforts to rid the world of the evils of terrorism.

19. Mr. AL-SABEEH (Kuwait) said that terrorism had been the greatest obstacle to development and to the realization of the goals of the Charter of the United Nations. It was imperative, therefore, that the international community should take the necessary steps to strengthen cooperation with a view to eliminating the phenomenon.

20. Terrorism stemmed from weak logic and the absence of the most fundamental principles of the peaceful, civilized approach to dealing with others. It lived in the midst of civilized society, by which it was rejected. That description perfectly fitted the Iraqi regime, which acted barbarically and totally lacked civility and wisdom in dealing with the civilized international community, as evidenced by its fruitless war with its neighbour Iran; the suffering of its people in the North and the South, who had appealed to the United Nations for protection; its invasion and occupation of Kuwait, involving the loss of human lives, the burning of oil wells and deliberate destruction of the environment;

its financing and planning of a kidnapping attempt against the previous President of the United States of America; its harassment of the members of the United Nations Special Commission for the destruction of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction; its massing of 100,000 Iraqi troops at the Kuwaiti border in October 1994 in reaction to continued pressure from the Security Council to perform its obligations with respect to the international community; and finally, its concealment of an arsenal, only recently disclosed, of chemical and biological weapons sufficient to destroy the entire world.

21. It was Iraq's adoption of a policy of terrorism and support of terrorists that had subjected the country to an international embargo. Iraq's adoption of such a policy had hampered development not only in Iraq, but in all the countries of the region, owing to the rechannelling of resources, both monetary and human, to combat Iraqi terrorism. The Iraqi regime believed that such practices would win it the respect of the international community, but they only made other States more convinced of the terroristic and aggressive nature of that regime.

22. International solidarity was the only guarantee of success in the efforts to eliminate terrorism. Practical, effective measures must be taken within the framework of bilateral, regional and international cooperation, and States must undertake to abide by their commitments under international law to hand over terrorists and cooperate in their arrest.

23. Mr. LAMAMRA (Algeria) said that the adoption of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism had been an important step towards a change in international relations and awareness that terrorist violence, whatever its forms and motivations, could not be permitted.

24. Since the adoption of that Declaration there had been an alarming increase in international terrorism which had inflicted unspeakable suffering and cost too many innocent lives. Children had been killed because they were going to school, women had been massacred for assuming their roles as citizens, intellectuals and journalists had been assassinated for refusing subservience in their thoughts and writings, and foreigners had paid with their lives for their mere presence in places to which intolerance forbade them access. Even Addis Ababa, headquarters of the Organization for African Unity had witnessed a terrorist attack against a visiting head of State. Even in the immediate neighbourhood of United Nations Headquarters, terrorism had made itself felt. Since terrorism was present everywhere in obvious or latent form, it was normal that the United Nations should be called upon to use its political and moral authority and its legal resources in an attempt to eliminate terrorism and that those who lived daily with terrorism as a threat to their societies should increasingly demand a strict equivalence between words and deeds in that area of international relations.

25. The Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism was both the end of a process and a point of departure for the consideration of terrorism by the United Nations. In view of the limits imposed on United Nations actions that instrument was an important achievement, but it merely indicated the path to be followed; Member States, the Secretariat and all other competent bodies must now follow that path in order to ensure that the Declaration achieved the

desired effects. He commended the Secretary-General's personal commitment to international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and took note of the report (A/50/372), which provided a basis for concrete action on a larger scale. He drew attention to the position of the Algerian Government as contained in document A/50/372/Add.1 and to the recent activities of the Council of Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs of Member States of the European Union aimed at reinforcing regional cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Experience had shown that no country or continent was a sanctuary as far as terrorism was concerned and that only mutual assistance among nations on the broadest possible scale could be effective.

26. Terrorism was a major challenge to the international community since it represented a threat to international peace and security which included systematic violations of human rights, beginning with the fundamental right to life. It ran counter to the trend towards pluralistic democracy and jeopardized economic and social development. A firm and effective international response was therefore necessary, and the United Nations must be the crucible of universal and effective solidarity in the combat against terrorism. All States which believed in the dignity and worth of the human person should support those Member States that were targets for terrorist activities which were inspired and aided by certain countries known to be actively fostering destabilization.

27. For over four years, Algeria had been fighting to destroy the roots of terrorist violence. It had shown clemency to those of its citizens who had been driven to acts of despair by foreign manipulators whom Algeria had publicly denounced. Algeria was fighting not only for itself but for others, out of a sense of its national, regional and international responsibilities. Thanks to the sacrifices of Algerian patriots and citizens and to the perseverance of various governmental bodies, terrorism had been permanently defeated in Algeria. The barbarous acts which continued to afflict that country and to destroy the achievements of its development efforts were merely the signs of moral failure and a gamble that had not succeeded. But even as Algeria prepared to consolidate the democratic process by holding its first pluralistic presidential election, the spokesmen of terrorism still found havens from which they continued their call for hatred and their justification of criminal activity.

28. The United Nations should eschew a selective and technical approach to terrorism; nothing could be more in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter than the unanimous view of the General Assembly that the fight against terrorism was common to all because it was indissociable from the universal protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the free expression of popular sovereignty.

29. On that question, as on others, Algeria had often maintained that the Sixth Committee was the appropriate body to respond to the needs and expectations of the international community. The Committee must reject conservatism and excessive caution and work towards the development of legal norms. It must constantly affirm the pertinence and pre-eminence of international law in casting light on the shadows which allowed terrorist manipulators to escape responsibility for their actions. The Committee must continue to strengthen measures for combating international terrorism until no human life anywhere would fall victim to terrorist violence.

30. Mr. CHIRILA (Romania) said that the fight against terrorism, a problem the United Nations had been discussing since 1972, was still a priority for the international community. While progress had been made, the numerous terrorist attacks and the alarming number of victims confirmed the continued existence of the problem. During the anniversary year of the United Nations, it was all the more urgent that a viable solution should be found. It was that urgency which had led to the adoption by consensus of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, which provided the necessary bases for effective international cooperation in an area of great importance. It was now the responsibility of all Member States to implement the spirit and content of the Declaration, a task which would require a firm and resolute approach on the part of the entire international community. Under paragraph 10 of the Declaration, the Secretary-General was to assist in its implementation through a series of practical measures which Romania fully supported.

31. His delegation wished to reiterate its condemnation of all terrorist acts, methods and practices, which were unjustifiable wherever they occurred and whatever the motive. Member States must respect their obligation to refrain from organizing or assisting terrorist acts in other States and acquiescing in or encouraging such activities within their territories. Respect for that fundamental principle was a central element of any cooperation in good faith among States. The battle against international terrorism would require both political will and sustained effort on the part of all States. Those responsible for terrorist acts must be treated as criminals and prosecuted and punished accordingly. The links between international terrorism and organized crime, particularly the traffic in drugs and arms, was a complicated network requiring a concerted effort on the part of the international community.

32. Romania was aware of the consequences of terrorist attacks and had ratified virtually all of the legal instruments mentioned in the annex to document A/50/372. It encouraged those States which were not parties to one or more of those conventions to consider acceding to them. Romania had also concluded bilateral treaties with various States and remained convinced of the importance of cooperation in that area, particularly with regard to the exchange of information in order to prevent terrorist acts and to apprehend and to prosecute or extradite those suspected of perpetrating such acts. National efforts to combat terrorism were an indispensable complement to international cooperation. At the regional level, the work of the European Union, as illustrated by the recent statement by the representative of Spain, gave eloquent proof of that fact. Educational activities aimed at increasing public awareness of the problems raised by international terrorism were also of great importance and should be included among the measures aimed at preventing terrorism. Increased cooperation among States, the adoption and implementation of practical measures, and a strict respect for the conventions on terrorism were all means of combating terrorism effectively. His delegation hoped that the momentum created by the adoption of the Declaration would be maintained and would lead to effective cooperation among States in the fight against international terrorism.

33. Mr. BIØRN LIAN (Norway) welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 49/60 on measures to eliminate international terrorism and urged all States to promote and implement the provisions of that resolution.

International terrorism could only be eliminated through international cooperation.

34. International terrorism was being discussed in an increasing number of United Nations forums and contexts. While Norway welcomed the increasing attention given to the issue, it was concerned by that proliferation, which might lead to parallel discussions and conflicting conclusions and recommendations. The best forum for fruitful consideration of international terrorism was the Sixth Committee, whose nearly universal membership made it the broadest possible forum for discussion and would ensure that all views could be considered.

35. There had recently been discussions in some international forums of the question whether terrorism violated human rights, in the course of which it had been implied that terrorists violated the human rights of their victims. However, Norway felt that only States, not individuals, could be held responsible under international law for violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It was therefore necessary to distinguish between human rights and humanitarian law, the latter having long-established provisions for the determination of individual responsibility. The discussion of ways and means to combat international terrorism could best be served by focusing on action by the international community rather than by confusing the issue by discussing whether persons not acting on behalf of a Government violated the human rights of the victims of their terrorist acts.

36. Norway felt that an international conference to define terrorism would serve little purpose; the issues involved might become even more confused than they currently were and existing differences of opinion might be exacerbated. The best approach appeared to be that of enhanced participation in and accession to existing international agreements aimed at preventing international terrorism and attempts to ensure that the perpetrators of terrorist acts were brought to justice. In the context of possible new conventions, a change of focus from defining terrorism to combating it and protecting innocent third parties would be the most productive strategy. Norway condemned all forms of terrorism and believed that violent action against innocent people in the service of political objectives could be neither defended nor justified.

37. Speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries he stressed their dismay at the fact that terrorists acting under the name of Al-Faran had abducted and brutally killed a Norwegian tourist, Hans Christian Ostroe, in Kashmir. He reiterated the demand made by the five Nordic Foreign Ministers in a recent statement, to the effect that Al-Faran must immediately and unconditionally release the remaining American, German and British hostages kidnapped in Kashmir. The international community must continue its efforts to combat terrorism in all forms and to bring to justice those responsible for terrorist acts, including those operating under the name of Al-Faran and the individuals behind them.

38. Mr. ELARABY (Egypt) said that, as in the case of war, terrorist acts created an aftermath of fear spawned by the feeling that the fundamental human right to life had been jeopardized. They also constituted a gross violation of the Charter of the United Nations and endangered friendly relations between

States, thus demanding affirmation of the international commitment to addressing the problem. Despite the adoption of various international declarations and instruments on the subject, however, the true will needed to eliminate terrorism through cooperation and full commitment to the implementation of such instruments had not yet materialized. He regretted that certain irresponsible organizations continued to conspire with and lend financial support to groups which committed terrorist acts aimed at the political and economic destabilization of the countries targeted.

39. Attempts to combat international terrorism would not succeed unless all States complied fully with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, particularly with regard to non-intervention in domestic affairs and the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of any State. Secondly, the international community should act decisively and without double standards in dealing with criminal acts of terrorism, while simultaneously monitoring compliance with the relevant international instruments and taking punitive measures against parties which violated them. In that respect, he proposed the submission of an annual report to the Security Council on terrorist acts perpetrated in violation of such instruments. Thirdly, a commitment should be made not to harbour, train or finance terrorists, or to promote or incite terrorism, and to surrender perpetrators of terrorist acts for prosecution in accordance with the relevant international instruments. Lastly, the international criminal court should be established quickly and operate under a system free of loopholes with a view to ensuring that those accused of terrorist crimes did not escape with impunity if they could not be tried before national courts.

40. Mr. MOCHOCHOKO (Lesotho) said that his Government was committed to combating terrorism and related crimes. It strongly condemned all terrorist acts, methods and practices as criminal actions whose aim was to destroy the lives and property of innocent people and violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. Strong measures were needed at the national, regional and international levels to stop terrorists and anyone assisting or encouraging them.

41. Cooperative action was vital to preventing transnational and organized crime, terrorism, drug trafficking and related paramilitary activity, all of which were on the rise world wide, aided by technological progress in transportation and communication and the globalization of trade and finance.

42. Between 1979 and 1991, the United Nations had adopted six resolutions designed to promote international cooperation in the combat against terrorism. The adoption of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism was a welcome and important step towards the expansion and promotion of such cooperation. In that connection, his country strongly supported the convening of an international conference on terrorism, for the purpose of defining terrorism and elaborating an international convention on the matter.

43. International cooperation must remain a priority. Effective collaborative efforts to prevent terrorism needed to be developed or strengthened at all levels, including cooperation between States in law enforcement and criminal justice. Attention must be drawn to terrorist activities, which were intended

to destroy human rights and constituted a threat to peace. States should cooperate in developing, through the mass media, general educational and public awareness programmes about the dangers of terrorism. In that context, his delegation commended the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the United Nations Office at Vienna for organizing workshops and training seminars relating to crime prevention and criminal justice and hoped that sufficient funds and resources would be allocated so that such activities could continue. It also supported the efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to foster public awareness of the need to eliminate terrorism. Both bodies should be strengthened so that they might properly fulfil their mission, including the preservation of peace and the fight against crime in the context of the rule of law.

44. The Basotho Nation was renowned for its love of peace. Yet, because terrorism knew no boundaries, no State was safe from it. While his country did not have specific legislation on that matter, acts of terrorism were punishable under its penal code.

45. His Government fully supported the proposals of the Secretary-General contained in his report on measures to eliminate terrorism (A/50/372) and wished to pledge its support for all efforts in that direction. In that regard it had already ratified or acceded to a number of legal instruments relating to various aspects of the problem of international terrorism.

46. Mr. ENAYAT (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation endorsed General Assembly resolution 49/60, which unequivocally condemned as criminal and unjustifiable all terrorist acts, methods and practices. It also endorsed the principles set forth in related General Assembly resolutions, in particular resolutions 46/51 and 48/122.

47. His country had been the target of terrorism and had lost several prominent and ordinary citizens as a result. Most recently, an Iranian aircraft had been hijacked and its passengers, including children, detained for over thirty hours.

48. The United Nations must seek ways to prevent and eradicate international terrorism, which posed a fundamental threat to the maintenance of international peace and security. His country was convinced that the international community had the requisite political will to achieve that reasonable, albeit somewhat difficult, goal.

49. Measures aimed at preventing and combating terrorism should be applied not only to individual acts but also to acts committed by groups or States. His country, inspired by the noble teachings of Islam, had condemned all such attacks and had taken the necessary steps to curb and combat terrorism. It was regrettable that some terrorists had been able to escape from justice and find safe haven in certain countries, free to continue their terrorist activities.

50. His delegation welcomed the declaration of the Seventh Islamic Summit Conference of December 1994, which denounced all forms of terrorism including State terrorism, since such acts represented a blatant violation of the principles of the true Islamic religion and a total disregard for the Iranian heritage. The declaration invited States to join, in a spirit of cooperation,

in international efforts to eliminate terrorism, without prejudice to the legitimate right of national resistance movements to rise up against occupation and to ensure national rights.

51. The early completion of the draft Code of Crimes against the Peace and Security of Mankind and of the draft statute for an international criminal court would certainly contribute to the combat against terrorism. In that connection, article 24 of the draft Code needed more careful scrutiny. In his view, the crime of international terrorism should be included in the list of crimes against the peace and security of mankind, but the exact conditions under which an individual act of terrorism could be regarded as such a crime must be specified clearly.

52. It was essential for each State to commit itself to a clear and consistent policy against all forms of terrorism and to fulfil its international obligations in good faith by taking strong and effective measures against it.

53. Mr. CASTELLON (Nicaragua) said that his Government firmly repudiated and condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, wherever and by whomever committed. It deplored the loss of innocent lives resulting from such acts and their deleterious effects on international relations through the creation of generalized insecurity.

54. His Government accordingly welcomed with great satisfaction General Assembly resolution 49/60 and its annex, the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, which considered international cooperation as basic to any efforts to prevent, repress and eradicate terrorism and emphasized the important role the United Nations had to play in such efforts.

55. His Government was a party to various conventions which condemned terrorism in its various forms, elaborated under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of American States. It had also concluded various bilateral agreements relating to the extradition and trial of terrorists and drug traffickers. Diplomatic asylum was a humanitarian institution which could not and should not be granted to anyone who had committed a terrorist act. Such individuals were criminals who had to be punished in accordance with the internal legislation of States and in conformity with international law. As international cooperation grew, there would be fewer safe havens for terrorists and the combat against and punishment of terrorist acts would become more effective.

56. Within the framework of the Central American Integration System, one purpose of which was to develop a new regional security model, his Government had proposed the conclusion of a treaty for democratic security in Central America, which included a chapter on eradicating terrorism and organized crime. Under the treaty, a State party would pledge to combat terrorist activity and sabotage of any kind and to prevent on its territory activities which might give rise to such criminal acts or to other delicts of international significance. It would also be bound to take preventive measures designed to stop such criminal activities by individuals belonging to foreign terrorist groups or organizations or national or international groups linked to organized crime. To that end, cooperation between immigration agencies, the police and other

competent authorities would be strengthened. States parties to the treaty would also agree, if they had not already done so, to complete the necessary constitutional requirements for the ratification of or accession to the 1963 Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft; the 1971 OAS Convention to Prevent and Punish Acts of Terrorism taking the form of Crimes against Persons and Related Extortion that are of International Significance; the 1971 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation; the 1973 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents; the 1979 International Convention against the Taking of Hostages; the 1925 Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous and Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare; and the 1971 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

57. At the national level, terrorism could be combated through various means: education and, in particular, the promotion of a culture of peace and democracy; the establishment of institutions and mechanisms designed to increase civil participation in important Government decisions; and the establishment of a legitimate judicial structure committed to the eradication of violence.

58. For those reasons, and since many countries in Central America were facing post-war challenges, his Government had proposed the establishment, within the University for Peace, of a regional programme for the culture of peace and democracy in Central America, including Belize, which had been successfully carried out for over one year. The goal was attitudinal change: replacing a long-standing culture of violence with a culture of peace, reconciliation and tolerance.

59. Mrs. FLORES (Uruguay) said that terrorism, as a transnational phenomenon, was deleterious to individuals, States and the international community as a whole. Combating terrorism had been a concern of both the United Nations system and of States, at the national and regional levels. The General Assembly had adopted several resolutions, the most recent being resolution 49/60, which condemned terrorism and expressed a firm resolve to eliminate it in all its forms and manifestations. The Security Council had also stressed the need to adopt effective measures to combat terrorism. The International Law Commission had included international terrorism in the list of crimes to be dealt with under the draft Code of Crimes against the Peace and Security of Mankind, and adoption of the statute for an international criminal court, elaborated by the Commission would no doubt be an important step towards the elimination of terrorism.

60. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/60, the Secretary-General had reported to the Assembly, in document A/50/372, on the modalities of implementation of paragraph 10 of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism. Her delegation endorsed the Secretary-General's approach in that respect, with the exception of the arrangements for submitting material for the proposed compendium of national laws and regulations relating to international terrorism. Neither of the proposed alternatives - that the States concerned should translate their submissions into either English or

French or should provide a summary of the pertinent information in English or French - seemed appropriate.

61. The Declaration, in paragraphs 5 and 6, urged States to take effective and resolute measures to eliminate international terrorism and to enhance their cooperation in that area. The Central American States had adopted various declarations in that connection. The Declaration of San Pablo and the declaration adopted by the Eighth Rio Group Presidential Summit firmly condemned all terrorist acts and called upon the international community to combat them. More recently, in September 1995, the Final Declaration of the Ninth Meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Rio Group had condemned terrorism and reiterated the pledge to combat it through all legal means. The consultative meeting on cooperation to prevent and eliminate international terrorism, held in August 1995, had adopted a declaration stressing the need for and proposing ways of strengthening cooperation in the Americas at the regional level for the purpose of preventing and eliminating terrorism. At the Twenty-Ninth Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77, held in September 1995, the member States of the Rio Group had reiterated their concern about terrorism and their commitment to combating it.

62. Regional efforts to combat terrorism were continuing. An Inter-American conference on terrorism, under the auspices of the Organization of American States, was planned for the purpose of promoting international cooperation in the combat against terrorism. OAS had also adopted in 1971 the Convention to Prevent and Punish Acts of Terrorism Taking the Form of Crimes Against Persons and Related Extortion that are of International Significance.

63. Her delegation wished to reiterate that respect for international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations were the basic foundations for governing subjects of international law. Bearing in mind the importance of legal norms, her Government had ratified a series of international conventions relating to terrorism. It was convinced that international cooperation was basic to preventing international terrorism, in particular by means of the exchange of information and the creation of regional and subregional databanks. Another important step would be the establishment of a United Nations centre dedicated to the combat against terrorism.

64. States could join in the combat against international terrorism in a number of ways, including becoming parties to and ensuring the application of the relevant instruments; mutual assistance with judicial processes and extradition procedures; and cooperative efforts to ensure the protection of legal rights and to harmonize national legislation. Another useful approach would be to carry out, under United Nations auspices, research in the area of comparative law as it related to international terrorism.

65. If a consensus emerged, her delegation would not oppose the convening of an international conference for the purpose of elaborating a convention to define terrorism and investigate its causes. That would not, of course, exclude the taking of urgent measures or the development of inter-State cooperation to meet the immediate threats posed by terrorist activities.

66. The CHAIRMAN said he appreciated the dignified, concise and interesting approach delegations had taken to the complex topic currently before the Committee. A general trend was taking shape: States were endorsing an action-oriented approach and hoped, in particular, to strengthen international cooperation. The Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism was a useful basis for future efforts in that regard.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.